

EXTRACT
FROM
THE SEVENTY-SECOND REPORT
OF
THE COMMITTEE OF VISITING JUSTICES
OF THE
HANWELL LUNATIC ASYLUM,
RELATIVE TO
THE REPORT
OF THE
METROPOLITAN COMMISSIONERS
ON LUNACY.

WITH REMARKS
BY
MR. SERJEANT ADAMS,
LATE ONE OF THE VISITING JUSTICES.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY M'GOWAN AND CO.
GREAT WINDMILL STREET, HAYMARKET.

1844.

M'GOWAN AND CO., PRINTERS, GREAT WINDMILL STREET, HAYMARKET.

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PREFACE.

On the County day of the AUGUST GENERAL SESSIONS, the following Resolution was unanimously passed by the Middlesex Bench :—

“That the Report of the Commissioners of Lunacy sent to this Court by Secretary Sir James Graham, be referred to the Hanwell Lunatic Asylum Committee, with a request that they will favour this Court with their views and observations on those points of that Report which reflect on the management of their Asylum, and on the conduct of the Justices of Middlesex in respect thereof.”

Upon a careful investigation of the Report, in consequence of this Resolution, it appeared that some of the reflections were too petty to be worthy of notice; that in many of them the public would take no interest, and that nearly all of them were so scattered throughout the Report, and interlaced with other matters, as to render a complete refutation a more lengthened and laborious occupation than the value of the misrepresentations merited. The Committee therefore considered the more dignified course would be to limit their vindication to one leading subject of general interest and vast importance, and upon which the attack was direct and elaborate.

As one of the Committee, I cordially join in these sentiments, and their Report has my full concurrence; but I do not feel myself thereby precluded from adding, on my own responsibility, such proofs and illustrations of the injustice of the attack as my own research or experience has furnished. I have therefore re-printed the Report of the Committee with remarks, intentionally confining them (except with respect to the concluding observations) to the subject therein discussed. Those observations sufficiently demonstrate the spirit in which the Commissioners have viewed the system adopted at Hanwell,

PREFACE.

and I abstain from adducing other examples, only because care must be taken that a subject of this vital importance to the interests of humanity, does not degenerate into an unseemly quarrel between the Commissioners and the promoters of non-restraint.

As I have elsewhere observed, the Report of the Commissioners has greatly disappointed the friends of the humane system of treatment; in respect of which it is well known that the Visiting Justices of Hanwell have taken a conspicuous part; whilst their Reports have unsparingly attacked the abuses in the private licensed Houses under the Commissioners' superintendence. Upon this part of the Commissioners' Report, the Committee are correctly silent. They cannot, in their official Reports to the Bench, enter into a controversy with the Commissioners upon the comparative merits of the different systems of medical treatment; nor would it fall within their line of duty to discuss any errors into which the Commissioners may have fallen. The two instances given in my concluding observations, are fair specimens of the judgment and fidelity with which the Commissioners have discharged their important duties upon that subject; and although, by such means the triumph of the humane system may be for a time delayed, it is sound in principle and must ultimately prevail.

I wish it to be distinctly understood, that my observations are intended only to apply to the paid Commissioners. Whilst the Report affords cogent evidence of the impolicy of connecting in the same Commission, names of high authority with salaried individuals, it is abundantly evident that the enquiries have been directed, the evidence collected, and the Report written, by the paid Commissioners only.

I must in conclusion state, that this Report strongly demonstrates the policy of requiring that, in all official documents, the evidence on which the Report is founded should accompany its publication. The Commissioners must have applied to more authentic sources for information, and pursued their enquiries in a different spirit, if it had been requisite for them to support their statements by proofs.

JOHN ADAMS.

*No. 1, Serjeants Inn, Chancery Lane,
November 5th 1841.*

EXTRACT.

Since the publication of the last Report of the Visiting Justices, the Report of the Metropolitan Commissioners in Lunacy has been presented to the House of Commons, and printed and extensively circulated under the authority of Her Majesty's Government: and although it is not within the official duty of the Visiting Justices to discuss the general merits of that Report, they consider it to be incumbent upon them to draw the attention of the Bench to that part of it which reflects upon the system pursued at Hanwell for the admission of Patients, and which the Commissioners seem to look upon as a system generated by the Justices for Middlesex, instead of being, what it really is, the system directed by the Statute for the Regulation of County Asylums, and pursued generally throughout the Kingdom.

"The result of the system adopted by the Justices of Middlesex," say the Commissioners, "is, that the County Asylum is nearly filled with incurable Lunatics, while all the recent cases are practically excluded." The Visiting Justices admit this lamentable fact, but they deny it is the result of the system adopted by them, or that they are in any manner answerable for it. It extends to other County Lunatic Asylums, as appears from the returns in the report itself, and springs from causes which the Visiting Justices have no power to control. Among these may be reckoned the great increase of population and the publicity now given to the numerous cases of individual suffering formerly hidden from public notice, but it is mainly attributable to the increased longevity of the patients under the improved system of treatment adopted in Public Asylums, which tends to the prolongation of life by the care and attention paid to them and the comforts with which they are surrounded.

This important fact is incontestibly proved by the comparative number of deaths in public and private Asylums.

The annual mortality at Hanwell does not amount to 10 per cent, whilst the mortality in the private Asylums, which are under the superintendence of the Metropolitan Commissioners in Lunacy, as appears by the tables of the Statistical Society, exceeds 21 per cent ; and this diminution of the annual number of deaths which, in a County where the pauper Lunatics exceed 1300, amounts to nearly 100 annually, has been confounded by the Commissioners with an increase in the malady itself, and attributed by them to the mismanagement of the Hanwell Committee.

It is not denied that considerable embarrassment has been created in providing an increase of accommodation for this increased number of applicants, but your Committee trust that the court will agree with them in opinion that the true remedy will be the building of another Asylum and not the removal of those patients who have become tranquil under the humane regulations of a public Institution, either to a workhouse, which, to use the words of the Commissioners themselves, (p. 99) is in all cases "highly objectionable," or to the problematical advantages and the inferior accommodation of a private establishment.

One chapter of the Report of the Commissioners is devoted to the Statistics of Insanity, and although the Reports of private as well as public Asylums are given in it with respect to the general number in confinement, "the curable and incurable patients," their "number and condition," &c., the returns of the per centage of cures and deaths is *limited to the public Asylums only*. This is the more remarkable as the decrease in mortality affords one of the strongest proofs of the superiority of public Asylums, and accounts in the most satisfactory way for the insufficiency of accommodation they afford.

The Commissioners next proceed to censure the Visiting Justices for having taken no steps *to secure the admission of recent cases pursuant to their notice in 1831*, and that, in reference to the populous Parish of St. Mary-le-bone, they refused to exchange the old incurable for recent and curable cases.*

The notice referred to by the Commissioners is the following passage from the Report of the Visiting Justices presented at the Michaelmas Sessions 1831, about *four* months after the opening of the Asylum. "The County Asylum being capable of admitting a much greater number of patients than those confined at present in it, your Committee proposed to take measures for compelling the Overseers who have so made default, to send to the County Asylum those of their patients *whose cases there shall appear to be greatest probability of curing.*" The diminished amount of the weekly cost of a patient in Hanwell, as compared with that of a Private establishment, soon rendered it unnecessary for the Visiting Justices to take any measures for compelling the Overseers to send patients to the Asylum, and the Commissioners cannot but be aware that the selection of patients does not rest with the Visiting Justices, and that they have no control in that respect over the Overseers, nor any power by Act of Parliament to compel them to send their recent or curable cases.† As far as entreaty or remonstrance

* See Remarks, p. 22.

† Strange to tell, the Commissioners do not seem to be aware of the fact, that the selection of the patients does not rest with the Visiting Justices. "Your Lordship is aware (say the Commissioners, page 85) that the Legislature has not only given to Justices of the Peace the management of County Asylums, but also (as a necessary adjunct to carry into effect the objects for which they are erected) *the disposal of all the Pauper Lunatics in their respective*

could go, the Visiting Justices have at no time failed in their duty. As early as the year 1832, in their Report presented at the July Quarter Sessions, they say, "that many of the recent cases, your Committee regret to find, are still sent to private houses contrary to the directions of the Act of Parliament." In the year 1835 a copy of the 32nd Report of the Visiting Justices was sent, by order of the Court, to the several Vestries, with a request that the parties addressed would send into the Asylum new cases of Insanity in preference to cases which have been of long standing, as it has been found by experience that a much greater number is cured by early attention than by taking the patients indiscriminately; and Sir William Ellis, in his fifth Report, presented at the Epiphany Quarter Sessions in

Counties;"—and, reasoning upon this false assumption, they go on to say that they have not met with any instance in which the County Magistrates have availed themselves of the information afforded them by the above mentioned acts (alluding to the returns of the Commissioners to the Quarter Sessions required by stat. 9. Geo. 4. c. 40) or *have established any system for securing the early admission of Pauper Lunatics into the County Asylum.*" There is no foundation for this assumption of the Commissioners. There is no section in the statute which authorizes the establishment either by the Quarter Sessions or the Visiting Justices of any system for securing the early admission of patients, or making any rules or regulations, either for the disposal of Pauper Lunatic patients, or the compelling the Overseers to make any selection of them. Indeed, the Justices can no otherwise be said to have the disposal of the Pauper Lunatics within the County, than they have of the criminals. In the one case, upon the production of evidence of Insanity the patient is sent under a Justice's order to an Asylum; in the other, upon the production of evidence of guilt, to Bridewell; but in both cases the act is a judicial one, upon information upon oath laid before the committing Magistrate.

the year 1836, says, that the "additional room made for patients during the year has been almost entirely filled up by old and incurable cases; only 10, said to be of recent date, having been admitted. The number of cures must therefore be expected to be proportionally small." These were the only steps the Visiting Justices were empowered to take. They had no power of forcing obedience to their orders on the part of the overseers. The fault therefore exists with the Overseers, who, notwithstanding the repeated admonitions they have had, both public and private, have gone on up to the present time in making proper discrimination in their choice of patients to be sent to the Asylum until they have nearly filled the building with incurable cases. But the truth is, that so long as the Visiting Justices are without power to enforce a proper selection of patients, and so long as the weekly charge at Hanwell is less than at a private Asylum, and its accommodations are insufficient for the exigencies of the county, so long will the parish officers, with a short-sighted policy, send those patients to Hanwell who are most likely to continue a permanent burden upon their funds.

With respect to that part of the charge contained in the Report of the Commissioners which relates to the refusal of the Visiting Justices to allow "the populous Parish of Mary-le-bone" to exchange old incurable for recent and curable cases, your Committee might rest their defence, either on the fact that such changes are directly opposed both to the letter and the spirit of the statute for regulating County Asylums,* or on the strongly expressed opinions of the Commissioners themselves, in other parts of their Report, (pages 95 to 99) on the impolicy and impropriety of the practice of detaining Lunatics in work-houses. But this is a question of deep importance, and they hold it to be proper to state fully what passed respecting that application.

* Vide Remarks, p. 15.

An application having been made by the parish officers of Mary-le-bone to the Visiting Justices, requesting the co-operation of the Committee in causing the harmless and idiotic cases* chargeable to their parish to be discharged from time to time, in order to make room at the Asylum for more urgent cases, the matter, after some correspondence, was, on September 29th, 1842, referred to Dr. Conolly by the following resolution of the Committee.

“Resolved, that the communication read at the last meeting from the parish of St. Mary-le-bone be referred to Dr. Conolly, and that he be directed to report to the Committee, at the next meeting, whether there be any of the Mary-le-bone patients, who, without prejudice to their health or comfort, might be removed from the Asylum, and his opinion as to the general effects it might produce upon the Institution if the principle be carried out generally with all patients.”

On October the 6th, the following Report was presented by Dr. Conolly to the Committee :—

“REPORT.”

*“Concerning the Patients from the Parish of
St. Mary-le-bone.”*

“Hanwell, October 6th, 1842.

“Among the patients sent to the Asylum by any large parish,
“there are generally some who become perfectly calm
“under the influence of the general system pursued in it;
“and who, although quite unable to take care of them-
“selves, occasion no particular trouble. If it is just to say
“that the application of the non-restraint system to such
“patients is rendered easy, it is no less true that their
“tranquillity arises from the general operation of this
“undisturbing plan of treatment. *Of such patients*

* Vide Remarks, p. 22.

*“ belonging to the large parish of St. Mary-le-bone, there
 “ are eight female and four male patients.* Some of these
 “ are aged and feeble; some paralyzed, and all are occa-
 “ sionally irritable. It is not improbable that some of
 “ them would be as tractable in a workhouse as in an
 “ Asylum; but this could not be positively predicted of
 “ any one of them, whilst in some of the rest it is equally
 “ probable that their fits of irritability would become exag-
 “ gerated into short and mischievous attacks of mania; dur-
 “ ing which various accidents might occur, including suicide.*

*“ A natural zeal for the reputation of the Asylum as a place
 “ of cure, cannot but make the Resident Physician desirous
 “ that patients should be sent to it in the recent stage of
 “ their malady; but if this can only be effected by dis-
 “ missing, uncured, those who have been relieved from
 “ much of the distress incidental to insanity, it will be
 “ done with the counterbalance of serious disadvantages.
 “ The general expectation of removal which would thus
 “ be created, the removal being known not to depend on
 “ the recovery of reason, would produce a general restless-
 “ ness unfavourable to the comfort of the Asylum. And
 “ as most of the patients so discharged would become
 “ worse at some future period, several of them would be
 “ eventually returned to the Asylum in a less manageable
 “ state or in a sinking condition, thus adding in the end to
 “ the number of cases sent to the Asylum incapable
 “ either of cure or alleviation.†*

To the Visiting Justices of the } “ J. CONOLLY.”
 Middlesex Lunatic Asylum. }

* The number of patients belonging to Mary-le-bone in the Asylum, is 79.

† After a perusal of these Documents may not a Visiting Jus-

The Report was on the same day transmitted to the Board of Directors and Guardians of the Parish of St. Mary-le-bone, with an intimation that the Visiting Justices would be happy to receive a deputation from the Board if they were desirous of having one, and on October 22nd the following reply was received by the Clerk to the Visiting Justices, from which time no further application has been made by the parish.

“ St. Mary-le-bone,
21st October, 1842.”

SIR,

“ I have to acknowledge the receipt of a communication from the Visiting Justices of the County Lunatic Asylum, together with the copy of a Report made by Dr. Conolly to the Visiting Justices in reference to the discharge of idiotic cases chargeable to the parish of St. Mary-le-bone, which have been laid before the Board of Directors and Guardians this day, and I am to express to you their thanks for the same.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

“ THOMAS THORNE,

Charles Wright, Esq.

Secretary.”

tice of Hanwell be pardoned, if it be with some feeling of indignation that he records the representation made by the Commissioners of the conduct of the Committee upon this application of the Marylebone Vestry ? “ They requested the Committee of Visiting Justices (say they, p. 87) to permit them to exchange some of their old incurable patients at the Asylum, for recent curable from the Workhouse. This the Justices refused to do, *on the ground that the diet was better at Hanwell than at the Workhouse, and that the patients enjoyed more comfort at the County Asylum.*” Would the Commissioners have ventured upon this gross misrepresentation if they had been compelled to annex an appendix of documents to their Report ?

Your Committee, in concluding this vindication of their conduct, cannot refrain from expressing their regret, that, upon a subject of such importance, the Commissioners *should never at any time have applied for information to the officers of the Asylum or to any Member of the Committee*. Had they taken this precaution before they censured the Visiting Justices, the court would have been spared the trouble of this defence and the Commissioners the pain of having preferred a causeless accusation. Your Committee had no wish to withhold from the parish of Mary-le-bone the advantages of exchanging their recent cases for those that are old and incurable, if it could have been done without incurring the very serious risks adverted to in Dr. Conolly's Report, and if it did not involve the additional risk of great suffering to those who must have been sent back to private Asylums and Workhouses. Influenced by these motives, and directed by this advice, it is to be hoped that the court will approve of the resolution of the Visiting Justices, to which resolution they still adhere, not to permit an exchange of Patients.*

C. A. TULK, *Chairman*.

October 17th 1844.

* We are glad (say the Commissioners, page 93,) to remark that the Visiting Justices of the Asylums for the West Riding of the County of York, and for the Counties of Nottingham and Stafford, permit the substitution of recent for old cases." In passing this eulogium on these Counties, the Commissioners have concealed the important facts, that, in two of the three Asylums, the system has been acted upon in a very limited degree, from extreme necessity only, and that in the third, where there has always been sufficient room to re-admit those Patients who have upon their discharge again become violent, the evils pointed out by Dr. Conolly have actually arisen,

and although Patients of "a quiet and harmless character," have in all the cases been carefully selected for removal, upwards of *a fifth* have been re-admitted into the Asylum within a short period after their discharge, having again become violent and troublesome. They have, moreover, omitted the important fact, that it is the united opinion of the three Superintendents, that it is not a practice to be generally recommended. What reliance can be placed upon any part of a Report containing statements so partial and so calculated to mislead?

REMARKS.

Many of the mistaken views and false conclusions of the Commissioners, spring from their fundamental error, alluded to in the Report of the Visiting Justices, as to the objects and purposes of County Asylums.

“ The professed and indeed *main* object of a County Asylum (say they, p. 88.) *is, or ought to be, the cure of Insanity.* The Patient who has had the benefit of a Trial in the Asylum *where he has become incurable*, should, we submit, give way to the afflicted Pauper who is in the Work House or at Home, and is *probably curable* and equally entitled to be received at the Asylum.” The principles thus promulgated are directly at variance with the legislative provisions upon the subject. The title of the stat. 9, Geo. IV. c. 40, is “ An act to amend the Laws for the Erection and Regulation of County Lunatic Asylums, and more effectually to provide for *the care and maintenance* of Pauper and Criminal Lunatics.” The preamble follows the principle laid down in the title; and all the provisions are framed with a view to the permanent residence of incurable Paupers once admitted within these places of refuge. There is not a clause which contemplates, in the remotest degree, the removal of incurable Paupers, “ *who have had the benefit of a trial*,” to make room for others “ *probably curable* ;” or provides a place to which such incurables are to be removed. Provisions of a contrary character are sufficiently abundant. A penalty attaches if any Patients in a County Asylum are suffered to go at large: the medical attendant cannot give a certificate of discharge, unless the Patient is *cured*: and although, by the 39th section, the Visiting Justices have the power, *if they think fit*, to deliver over to the *custody and care* of any relation or friend, any Pauper Lunatic Patient *confined* therein, they cannot exercise that power unless the Over-

seers of the Parish to which the Patient belongs, *are first satisfied*, upon the undertaking of such relative or friend, that he will be no longer chargeable to the parish, that is to say, no longer a PAUPER.

Indeed the name "Asylum" denotes (see Johnson's Dictionary) "a Refuge, a place of Retreat and Security," and is contra-distinguished from a "Hospital" or place of cure. Bethlem and St. Luke's are Hospitals for the cure of the Insane, and act on the principle of Hospitals, and discharge the uncured Patients after twelve months' trial; and the existence of these two invaluable Institutions in the Metropolitan County, is one great cause, as the annual published returns of those Hospitals and of the Visiting Justices of Hanwell will testify, (although it has escaped the notice of the Commissioners) of the fewness of recent cases which find their way into Hanwell.

Upon a careful perusal of all the preceding acts of Parliament for the regulation of Pauper Lunatics, the same principle prevails throughout, and those who are familiar with the Investigations which took place previous to the first legislative enactment respecting County Asylums, know that it was the total absence of all *care* in the *treatment* and *maintenance* of *incurable* Pauper Lunatics, and the horrible cruelties inflicted upon them, which occasioned the interference of Parliament. And this is the wise and really humane view of the subject. It is a well ascertained statistical fact, although the Commissioners are silent on the subject, that the average recoveries from attacks of Insanity are about 50 per cent, and that, of these recoveries, the greater number take place within the first three months after the attack. An enquiry into the annals of Hanwell, properly directed and faithfully pursued, would have informed the Commissioners of other causes, in addition to the constant and gratuitous reception of recent cases into the Hos-

pitals of Bethlem and St. Luke, which operate to place incurables in the County Asylum. The Commissioners assume that all the inmates of that Asylum were in a state of Pauperism at the time of the first attack, and that the attack in each case was sudden. They are wrong in both conclusions.

“ It often happens,” says Dr. Conolly, (vide 53rd Hanwell Report) “ that Insanity makes its first advances slowly, manifesting itself by eccentric and irregular conduct, fits of idleness, or dissipation, or of extravagance, long before it is clearly recognized. These first symptoms of the disorder, inconvenient in every rank of life, are ruinous to a family dependant on the daily labour of a husband and a father.” Had the Commissioners sought for knowledge at the fountain head, and instituted enquiries into this most interesting and important topic, they would have found, that amongst the inmates of public Asylums, there are many whose pauperism has been caused by their sad affliction, and whose small means were not exhausted until the period for cure had long passed ; many also, the children or relations of persons earning a decent subsistence, who have strained their small means to support the afflicted sufferers during the earlier stages of their disorder ; some also who have been the inmates of private Asylums until their funds have failed ; and there are not wanting those chronic sufferers, whose friends sturdily refuse to contribute to their maintenance, satisfied that they render their unfortunate relatives more effectual aid by securing to them, as Paupers, the advantages of a public Asylum, than by placing them as contributory patients in a private establishment.

The truth is, as the Commissioners would have found if they had thoroughly examined the subject, that the number of recent curable cases amongst actual Paupers, as compared to the whole number of Pauper Lunatics, are, and must be, few in number, and that there is not a County Asylum which would not be pre-

posterously large, if the *cure*, and not the proper *care and maintenance* of Lunatics, was its primary object. I much doubt, taking into account the Hospitals of Bethlem and St. Luke, whether a Hospital capable of containing 100 Patients, and devoted solely to the cure of Insanity, upon the true principle of a Hospital, that is to say, limiting the period of admission to three months from the date of the attack, and discharging the uncured Patients at the end of twelvemonths from the time of admission, could be supplied with Middlesex Pauper Lunatics, properly so termed.

The Visiting Justices of the Surrey Asylum will pardon the introduction of their names in consideration of the important testimony afforded by the state of their asylum, so recently erected, upon this important subject. The Surrey Asylum was opened for the reception of Patients on June 14th, 1841, and, with a laudable anxiety to obtain the most fitting cases, the resident physician (although without legal authority) went round to the different licensed Asylums and selected 299 of the most fitting cases for removal—cogent evidence of the views of the founders of the Asylum, and of the absence of a supply of recent cases to fill it. The different overseers acquiesced in the arrangement, and the 299 cases were removed accordingly, and of the whole number of cases admitted (including the 299) amounting to 385, *thirty-seven only were recent cases*. On the 1st of January, 1844, the number of patients in the Asylum was 382, of whom twenty only *were reported curable*. There were also at that time 209 Pauper Lunatics in Surrey elsewhere than in the Asylum, of whom the far greater portion would be chronic and incurable cases, making a total of 597. (Report, p. 91.)

The obvious conclusion from these premises is, that the number of recent cases chargeable to parishes in Surrey are almost insignificantly small as compared with the chronic cases, but this conclusion has wholly escaped the notice of the Commissioners. "We enquired (say they) if any steps had been taken

at this Asylum to secure recent cases being sent there," (their enquiry should have been as to where the recent cases were to "be found) and being informed that no measures had been adopted for that purpose, we fear (say they) that the condition of the County of Surrey, with an excellent Asylum, will soon, as regards the cure of its insane poor, be similar to that of the County of Middlesex, unless patients be sent to the Asylum in an earlier period of their disorder, *and some plan be devised for disposing of such of the incurable cases as it may be necessary in that event to remove.*"—WILL be similar to the County of Middlesex!—Why it is similar (twenty curable only out of 597 patients) and, in common with every other County Lunatic Asylum, always has been similar, and was intended so to be. Do the Commissioners really believe that the Surrey Magistrates built an Asylum capable of receiving 400 patients, without intending to make it a place for the "*care and maintenance*" of incurable Lunatics? and what plan would the Commissioners devise for *the disposal of the incurable cases*, other than their own suggestion, (page 206) namely, "*a public Asylum having a resident medical officer,*" that is to say the present Asylum?

In corroboration of these views I refer to the returns from the private licensed houses in Middlesex, (Report, p. 229,) from which it appears, that "not one out of ten Paupers who are admitted at Bethnal Green, arrive in a curable state," and that at Hoxton, "*in the majority of instances, the Pauper Patients received have undergone some previous treatment, though some cases are quite recent.*"

Is it not extraordinary, that it should not have occurred to the Commissioners, that when every Pauper County Asylum, and every private licensed House admitting Pauper Patients, is thus for the most part filled with incurable cases, that there must be some deeper cause for this state of things than the one which alone suggests itself to their understanding, namely, the omis-

sion of the magistrates to make regulations for the admission of recent cases.

It would be beyond the limits of these remarks to enter generally upon this interesting subject, but, reasoning only on the two well established facts, that the recoveries are about 50 per cent on the attacks, and that the average age at the time of the attack is under 40, and making a due allowance for congenital and epileptic cases, which form a large item in pauper establishments, but are excluded from the above average of cures, as also for the increased longevity in County Asylums, it will be found that the curable must, of necessity, bear a very small proportion to the chronic cases. By way of illustration, but not of course pledging myself to its strict accuracy, let it be assumed that the average cures (including epileptics and congenitals) are 40 per cent, the average duration of life of each incurable patient under the improved treatment eighteen years, and the average annual number of new cases 100, (that is to say, forty curable and sixty incurable). On this supposition, in and after the 36th year the numbers would stand thus :—recent and curable cases 40—chronic and incurable cases, $60 \times 18 = 1080$ —that is to say as 1 : 27, or 40 : 1080 : but this proportion would be again greatly diminished in Surrey and Middlesex, by the working of Bethlem and St. Luke's, the patients in those hospitals not being included in the annual parochial returns, so that the curable patients are sifted in all those cases, and are never returned amongst the parish paupers. So extensive is the operation of this principle, that of the whole number of patients in Hanwell on December 31, 1839, namely 834, 126 (being upwards of *a seventh*), have been ascertained to have been previously discharged as incurable from one or other of those hospitals. (Dr. Conolly's 3rd Report, Table 32.)

The whole subject requires a thorough investigation, by competent persons, before any new statutory regulations are adopted.

The Commissioners further observe, as a remarkable circumstance, with respect to Counties having public Pauper Asylums,

that it has been found necessary to enlarge almost every asylum of that sort that has hitherto been erected," (Report p. 89) and express great astonishment that "in a short period the Asylum becomes insufficient and crowded with a large and increasing number of *incurable cases*." To superficial observers it is a remarkable circumstance; to patient investigators it would be remarkable if it was otherwise. In nearly all the public Asylums to this time erected, the returns of the overseers of the numbers of Pauper Lunatics chargeable upon the Parishes within the County at the time of the erection, have been taken as the criterion of its necessities; and no allowance has been made for the operation of the three powerful causes stated in these remarks for the apparent increase assumed in the above Report. These causes must continue to operate for many years to come, and, whenever the subject shall be thoroughly investigated, it will be found, that there is no medium between an increase of establishments proportionate to the increased demand which the improved treatment in public Asylums creates, or a return to the old system of licensed Houses.

It is a melancholy reflection that the annual average of deaths amongst the Paupers in the Metropolitan private Asylums, under the superintendence of the Commissioners, should double in amount the average of deaths in Hanwell: it is a more melancholy reflection that the average deaths of Pauper patients in those Asylums should more than double the average of deaths in the same Asylums of patients not being Paupers: the most melancholy reflection is, that the Commissioners should have been silent as to these startling facts, and should think it "a remarkable circumstance" that County Asylums should require enlargement.

When carefully weighing the statements of the Commissioners, and contrasting them with existing facts, the mind is in constant doubt whether to attribute these mistakes to accident or design. Thus in the charge against the Hanwell Justices in respect of the parish of St. Marylebone, not only is the Report of Dr. Conolly unnoticed, and a most unfair representation made of the grounds on which the Visiting Justices acted, (ante, p. 12) but the Commissioners charge them

with having refused to exchange “ *old incurable* for *recent and curable* cases.” Now the original application of the parish in 1841, was to discharge the “ *harmless and idiotic*” to make room for “ *more urgent cases.*” Why have not the Commissioners adverted to this circumstance ; for, although the words *chronic* and *acute* are afterwards used by the Vestry, the slightest application of their reasoning powers to the facts furnished by the Parish must have satisfied them that the term *urgent* was not used synonymously with *recent* and *curable*, but had some other meaning ? What that meaning was, the facts furnished by the Commissioners will show.

As thus “ In the Lunatic Wards of the Marylebone Workhouse (say the Commissioners, page 81) there were admitted, in the years 1842 and 1843, 190 Paupers considered as insane”—and “ the Overseers of the Parish could obtain admission into the Hanwell Asylum for only twenty-seven of the 190 cases.” It became, therefore, important to ascertain the duration of the insanity of these twenty-seven patients, and their chances of cure at the respective periods of their admission, both as showing, to a certain extent, the number of recent cases amongst the 190, and also as demonstrative of the mode in which the parish had availed themselves of the twenty-seven opportunities afforded to them. Now what is the fact. Of the *twenty-seven* cases, *twenty-four* were incurable, and the duration of insanity in those twenty-four cases, as ascertained by information afforded by the parish officers, and by the enquiries of the medical officers of the Asylum, is as follows :—

From Birth	1
Paralyzed when admitted.....	1
Chronic, incurable cases, duration entirely unknown	5
Ditto, known to have existed for many years.	2
Seventeen years.....	1
From three to ten years.	5
From one to three years	3
From six to twelve months.....	3
Under six months.....	3

Now the 190 paupers admitted in these years into the Mary-le-bone wards (averaging two weekly) either did or did not, produce a supply of *recent* and *curable* cases to fill the vacancies as they occurred, and in either case it is equally evident, that the word *urgent*, as used by the Mary-le-bone Vestry, did not mean *recent* and *curable*. I feel myself also justified in adding, (and I do so without intending to cast the slightest censure upon the overseers, but as one amongst many proofs of the necessity of a charitable Institution for the reception of chronic cases, where the sufferers though poor are not paupers,) that, within my own knowledge, in one at least of the twenty-seven cases the patient is an idiotic youth, whose father is a respectable journeyman in constant employ, and who repaid to the parish the whole of the weekly charge of the Asylum at the time when his son was originally admitted, and still bears a portion of the burthen.

In corroboration of these conclusions, I subjoin a return of the duration of insanity at the time of admission, of all the Mary-le-bone patients now in the Asylum.

From Birth.....	1
Paralyzed when admitted.....	1
Chronic, incurable cases, duration entirely unknown.....	17
Ditto, known to have existed for several years...	5
Thirty years.....	1
From ten to seventeen.....	5
From five to ten.....	9
From two to five.....	15
One year.....	5
From six to twelve months.....	11
Under six months.....	9
	<hr/>
	79

If the enquiries of the Commissioners had been pursued zealously and in a right spirit, what ample opportunities would

these communications with the Marylebone Vestry have afforded them of enquiring into the true state of Pauper Lunacy in Middlesex, and the real necessities of the County. A patient investigation of the 190 cases would have enabled them to ascertain the proportion of actual Paupers at the time of the attack; the average period of its duration before application made to the Overseers; the numbers previously to such application having been inmates of Bethlem or St. Luke's, or some private Asylum; the numbers reduced to poverty by reason of the attack; the rules by which the Parish are guided in locating patients in Hanwell, or Lunatic Asylums, or their own Lunatic Wards, and numerous other facts, similar in character and invaluable guides for future legislation. It is truly vexatious that the golden opportunities for enquiry into the actual state of Pauper Lunacy in Middlesex, which the communications of the Commissioners with the populous and wealthy parish of Marylebone afforded to them, should have been thus thrown away, and only made subservient to an idle attack upon the Visiting Justices of Hanwell for not exchanging old patients for new.

Independently of all graver considerations, as a Visiting Justice of some experience I have no hesitation in declaring, that the plan recommended by the Commissioners, of exchanging old cases for new within the Metropolitan County, is practically absurd and impossible.—The number of acting Magistrates in Middlesex (in all and every two of whom is vested the power of sending Patients to Hanwell) exceeds *one hundred*. The Committee of Visiting Justices appointed under the provision of the stat. 9. Geo. 4. c. 40. in whom by that stat. the whole controul and internal management of the Asylum is vested, but who possess no power or authority out of the Asylum either over their fellow Magistrates or the Overseers, are *fifteen*, the annual number of patients admitted exceeds *two hundred*, and the numbers waiting for admission exceed *four hundred*. How, under such circumstances, is the complicated machinery recommended by the Commissioners to be worked? Is each of the *hundred* Magistrates to refuse of his

own mere notion to send all cases but *recent cases* to the Asylum, delivering to the Overseers "his reasons in writing for such refusal" according to the 9 Geo. IV, c. 40. s. 45; the same being subject to the appeal of the Overseers at the next Quarter Sessions (sec. 46) upon which appeal he must pay his own costs; for the 46 sec. gives no power to award costs? And how are the Quarter Sessions to deal with such appeal, if upon the hearing it shall appear that at the time of the application for the order, or the time of the hearing, there was a vacancy in the Asylum, and that the party was a violent or irritable though probably an incurable Lunatic; or, assuming him not to be so, that there was a vacancy and no pending order of any other Justice for the admission of a recent case? Or, are the Justices to continue, as at present, to send to the Asylum all Pauper Lunatics brought before them, whom, with the very minute knowledge of the nature of Insanity which the great majority can possess, they shall adjudge to be *dangerous, or violent, or paralytic*, or what not? and are the Visiting Justices cull out from time to time the patients who have become quiet and tranquillized to make room for them? and is this selection to be general, or limited to the patients belonging to the Parish of the newly admitted individual? And to what places are the discharged patients to be sent? especially those whose settlements cannot be discovered, and who amount to *one-eighth* of the whole number of inmates? Are they to be returned to the Workhouses of their respective parishes, or sent to private licensed houses, or left to wander at large? And is this power to be executed *generally*, or only with the consent of the overseers of the parish to which the patient about to be discharged shall belong? And what are the Visiting Justices to do if the overseers shall refuse to receive back their patients? And, lastly, what is to become of the patients who shall again become violent? And what would be the probable consequences upon all the patients, if they understood (and they are far more intelligent than those unacquainted with their habits could suppose) that if *they ceased to be troublesome they could be again transferred to a workhouse or a private licensed house?*

I cannot conclude these remarks without expressing a wish, that, whilst I agree with the Committee that the Commissioners will feel much pained in respect of the false accusation herein so fully exposed, I could limit their misrepresentations to those subjects in which they have sought for information elsewhere than at the Asylum; but in truth they equally prevail where their knowledge is obtained within its walls; all sense of fairness being lost in the desire of having a fling at the Hanwell management. I select two instances of this character, pledging myself, if the Commissioners demand it, to produce a startling abundance.

My first example shall partake of the ludicrous. The chapter upon "Restraint" is graced by the following antithesis:—"At the Middlesex Asylum it has been attempted to defeat dirty habits by the administering of aperients; at the Lancaster Asylum good effects have been produced in obviating, and in many cases in entirely removing, such habits, by assiduously endeavouring to invite due attention to the calls of nature." (Report p. 14.) There is something so exquisitely droll in the notion of defeating dirty habits by the administration of aperients, that it is difficult to treat the charge with gravity. Is it not marvellous that *seven* medical men (notwithstanding the bitter sarcasm it conveyed against the Hanwell management) could be found so careless of their reputation as to affix their signatures to such nonsense? But is it not yet more marvellous that *four* out of the seven should have been the actual visitors to the Asylum, and the composers of the sarcasm. I trust it is needless to add that this gross absurdity exists only in their own imaginations. The systems pursued at Lancaster and Hanwell are precisely similar, **AND THE COMMISSIONERS KNEW IT.** The treatment of this class of patients has especially occupied the attention of the medical officers in both asylums; and the success of the system has been so encouraging at Hanwell under the present management, that, about the period of the last visit of the Commissioners, an additional salary was voted by the Com-

mittee to the principal attendant of those wards for his praiseworthy vigilance. The explanation of this absurd blunder will cover the Medical members of the Commission with eternal ridicule. Our experienced and most acute and intelligent house-surgeon, Dr. Begley, whilst explaining to them our mode of treating patients with dirty habits, told them that he had occasionally discovered in patients of this description a depraved appetite, which he had checked, and in some instances entirely removed, by the effect produced on the *fæces* by the use of gentle laxatives!

My second instance of misrepresentation shall be of a graver character. In the same chapter, in the middle of a paragraph pointing out what the Commissioners imagine to be instances of practical evils, arising out of the system of non-restraint as carried out at Hanwell, but in all of which they are mistaken or misinformed, a melancholy accident which occurred about eighteen months ago is thus lightly and summarily disposed of. "During the short interval between the first and last days of our visit to this Asylum, in June, 1843, one of the male patients was killed by another." (Report p. 142.) The inference intended to be drawn from this passage, as appears by the context, is, that this unfortunate circumstance was consequent upon the system of non-restraint, whilst the expression "*During the short interval, &c.*," leads to the conclusion that these accidents are of frequent occurrence; and it is more than probable that it was from this sentence that Mr. Sturges Bourne felt himself authorized in stating, at the last Quarter Sessions for Hampshire, when referring to the Commissioners' Report, that there were instances of murders in County Asylums. (*Hampshire Independent*, October 19th, 1844).

Now, was it not the bounden duty of the Commissioners, at paid servants of the Crown, before they gave official publicity to a charge so grave, and tending so seriously to weaken the general impression which happily prevails of the advantages of the absence of all mechanical restraint in the treatment of Lunatics, to have ascertained with the greatest care the true cir-

cumstances of the case, and registered them in their report with the most scrupulous fidelity? In this, as in the preceding instance, they must elect between wilful misrepresentation or culpable neglect. The unfortunate accident was wholly independent of the system of non-restraint, or the general discipline of the Asylum. The facts are shortly these:—The patient who was the unhappy cause of his fellow's death, is a quiet and inoffensive character, upon whom, even in the palmy days of manacles, the most ignorant keeper would not have placed a handcuff. On sudden provocation he struck the other patient, who fell upon the stone pavement, fractured his skull, and died. Upon a *post mortem* examination it appeared (although during life the fact could not be anticipated) that the skull, probably from disease, was præter-naturally thin, transparent, and brittle. The proofs of the truth of this statement are simple, and within the reach of the Commissioners—namely, an inspection of the surviving patient—the House Surgeon's *post mortem* examination of the deceased—and the testimony of the Coroner who presided at the inquest!

